

**Revised Draft
Environmental Impact Statement
General Management Plan**
**Mojave National Preserve
San Bernardino County, California**

This *Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement / General Management Plan* presents the proposed management approach and two alternatives for the management of the 1.6 million-acre Mojave National Preserve in the northeastern Mojave Desert in California. Mojave is a new unit of the National Park Service established by Congress on October 31, 1994, by the California Desert Protection Act (CDPA). The first *Draft Environmental Impact Statement / General Management Plan* was released for public review in September 1998. Eleven public meetings were conducted during the 127-day public review period. Based largely on public comments on that draft plan, the National Park Service made substantial revisions to the 1998 draft plan. This revised draft is being circulated for additional public review. Responses to comments received on the 1998 draft plan are available as a separately bound report.

The general management plan serves as the initial overall management strategy for park units covering 10–15 years. A general management plan is general rather than specific in nature, and focuses on purposes of the unit, its significant attributes, its mission in relation to the overall mission of the agency, what activities are appropriate within these constraints, and resource protection strategies. It also provides guidelines for visitor use and development of facilities for visitor enjoyment and administration of the Preserve. It serves as the overall umbrella guidance for a park unit under which more detailed activity or implementation plans are prepared.

The proposed general management plan (alternative 1) envisions Mojave National Preserve as a natural environment and a cultural landscape (an aridlands ecosystem overlain by many layers of human occupation and use from prehistoric, to historic, to the present time), where the protection of native desert ecosystems, natural processes, and historic resources is assured for future generations. The protection and perpetuation of native species in a self-sustaining environment is a primary long-term goal. The proposal seeks to manage the Preserve to perpetuate the sense of discovery, solitude and adventure that currently exists. This means minimizing development inside the Preserve, including the proliferation of signs, new camp grounds, and interpretive exhibits. The National Park Service would look to adjacent communities to provide most support services (food, gas, and lodging) for visitors. The proposal also seeks to provide the public, consistent with the NPS mission, with maximum opportunities for roadside camping, backcountry camping and access to the Preserve via existing roads. The proposal would seek funding for the complete rehabilitation of the historic Kelso Depot and its use as a museum and interpretive facility. For this National Park Service unit, a balance must be struck between the NPS mission of resource preservation and other mandates from Congress, such as maintaining grazing, hunting, and mining under NPS regulations, and continuing the existence of major utility corridors. The proposal would maintain the ability of landowners in Mojave to maintain their current way of life, while also seeking funding to purchase property from willing sellers where proposed uses conflict with the primary mission of preserving resources. Nearly 230,000 acres within the Preserve were in nonfederal ownership until the recent acquisition of 80,706 acres of Catellus lands.

In addition to the proposed general management plan (alternative 1), the alternatives included in this document also include the no-action alternative, which is existing management (alternative 2), and optional management plan concepts (alternative 3). The existing management alternative describes the continuation of current management strategies. It is commonly referred to as the no-action or status quo alternative. Under this alternative, existing visitor and administrative support services and facilities would be maintained in their current locations. There would be few improvements in existing structures and there would be no change in road maintenance, although some roads might be improved if funding became available. No significant changes in existing recreation use would occur. Kelso Depot would be stabilized if funding could be obtained, but it would not be rehabilitated. Land acquisition would focus on obtaining minimum funds to acquire property from willing sellers and properties where uses conflict with the Preserve mission. Alternative 3 addresses optional scenarios for several key issues where alternative concepts were identified. It provides for an increase in the facilities and services provided for public enjoyment. A small visitor contact building might be built at Cima to provide information. Land would be acquired in sensitive areas and wilderness. More restrictions are imposed on grazing in desert tortoise habitat and road closures in critical habitat are considered. In addition, this alternative evaluates the scenario of NPS maintaining all roads in the Preserve.

The 90-day opportunity for public comment starts with the Environmental Protection Agency filing a notice of availability in the Federal Register. Comments must be received by that time and should be sent to the following address:

Superintendent
Mojave National Preserve
222 E. Main St. Suite 202
Barstow, CA 92311

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR · NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
IN COOPERATION WITH**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR · BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT / U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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